

KPS PREPARES FOR TOMORROW

Small groups of students huddle around a table, fixing their attention on the array of scientific beakers and bottles in front of them. The students are eager, kneeling on their chairs, leaning forward, heads together, as they check out the experiment they are working on. The fifth-grade students bubble with excitement and enjoyment on a field trip to Davenport University as part of a STEM learning day.

STEM focuses on the studies of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and is one of many innovations taking place in Kentwood Public Schools to enhance learning and engagement and to prepare students for the future.

“Innovation begins with the student,” notes Sunil Joy, Director of Research and Innovation for Kentwood Public Schools. “It’s about creating more relevant, meaningful, and engaging learning experiences in order to meet the evolving demands of our world.”

Innovation in learning is happening across Kentwood Public Schools. In addition to STEM, leaders and educators in Kentwood are taking part in other innovative projects including a focus on Multiple Literacies in Project-Based Learning, utilizing high impact tutoring to help propel student learning forward, and exploring creative ways to enhance summer learning opportunities for students.

Innovation in learning is happening across Kentwood Public Schools.



The need for innovation in education is clear, particularly for a district that strives for excellence and equity in education for all students. Joy explains, “Innovation is important because we are preparing students, not just for the world of yesterday or today, but, most importantly, for the world of tomorrow.”

Innovation in Kentwood goes beyond initiatives directly connected with classroom instruction. Creativity and innovation are also evident in nutritional services, strategic planning, and transportation.

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For example, Kentwood Public Schools has approached the strategic planning process by seeking input from all members of the community—students, families, community members, and staff. The board and members of the KPS community have contributed their ideas to help create the...

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SMALL STEPS BIG VOICES BY: MARIAH WALKER

Brookwood ARCH students are doing big things. From recreating the Milky Way Galaxy to learning how textiles are made, the students are learning to use their voice in their education. ARCH staff members have been challenged to incorporate more student voice into project-based learning. Simply put, educational projects are designed to reflect the interests of the students.

Think back to when you were a student. Did you have the opportunity to choose what you were learning? If so, how did that make the experience different from other learning experiences? If not, what impact do you think choice would have had on your learning?

ARCH is a space where a student's voice commands the spotlight. ARCH staff members actively seek out students' suggestions and reflect with students on their learning experience. By giving students a chance to vocalize their interests, education becomes personalized. So, how do you respond to a student saying, "We should have more candy."; "Why do we always have to wash our hands?"; "Can we learn more about Mexico?"; or "We should make the whole universe!"?

You make piñatas to stuff with candy, teach students about their origins in Mexico and how they've evolved throughout the years. You do science experiments about bacteria growth to show students the difference between washing hands and sanitizing them. You tell them that the universe is quite vast with a lot of unknowns and see if they'll settle for a galaxy instead.

Large projects can be daunting, so our ARCH staff members work with students to break down larger projects into small pieces. Day by day, students see a large abstract idea become a reality from their daily efforts. When a completed project is displayed, students experience a different kind of pride. It's not just the pride of a job well done, but the pride of being seen in their work. It's Falcon Pride in ARCH.



ARCH STEM SQUAD AT CRESTWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Starting in January 2023, Crestwood ARCH students began collaborating with Camp Blodgett to complete weekly STEM challenges. Camp Blodgett began in 1921 as a summer camp program located on the shore of Lake Michigan for orphaned children. Since then, the camp has expanded to serve children ages 8-17 across all of Kent County through both summer and school year programs. Camp Blodgett's mission is to empower youth in West Michigan through educational and recreational experiences that promote social responsibility, encourage academic success, and support the development of healthy self-esteem.

During the after-school STEM Squad, ARCH students participated in hands-on science, technology and engineering activities led by STEM Greenhouse and based on middle school Next Generation Science Standards. Students also participated in math skill building exercises and activities related to life skills and career exploration, helping youth to develop their whole selves.

With the guidance of Camp Blodgett and ARCH staff, students competed to build the tallest tower, the most stable zip-line, the most successful ping-pong ball launcher, and the safest vessel to transport an egg. Students were required to work as a team, think critically, and use their creativity to execute their team's plan and accomplish the task they were given each week.



EXPLORER STUDENTS TAKE FLIGHT

Innovations are everywhere in Kentwood Public Schools, even when it comes to celebrations! In March, schools across the district took part in March is Reading Month. This involved a lot of fun activities, including guest readers at our schools.

At Explorer Elementary, the theme for March was "Reading Takes You Places." The staff used their creativity with their culminating activity to celebrate reading. Explorer staff members created an airplane in one of their classrooms for students to take part in a reading-themed flight! Students were able to climb aboard for a journey that included an in-flight movie, greetings from flight crew members, and a snack cart.

The airplane simulation and March is Reading Month theme were all part of a year-long focus at Explorer on how books can take you all over the world. The students loved this airplane experience! Thanks to the Explorer staff for creating this innovative celebration.

KPS Prepares for Tomorrow

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ideas to help create the vision and direction for Kentwood Public Schools for the foreseeable future.

Innovation is also seen in areas like child nutrition and district transportation. Bond funds approved by the Kentwood community are being used to remake the district's kitchens in the various schools, creating healthier, more diverse and appetizing food choices for our students. Electric vans have also been purchased, as an innovative and environmentally friendly approach to transporting students in KPS.

Kentwood Public Schools is committed to continuing to look at innovative ways to meet the needs of our students and to grow as a district. "Innovation requires thoughtful reflection on where things stand and what the future could look like," said Superintendent Kevin Polston. "Kentwood Public Schools is committed to becoming a model district for the state and the nation. Innovation will be a key lever in making this a reality."



15th Annual

AM & PM STARTS
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EXPLORER ARCH WHEEL OF EMOTION

Working with young students every day means that you need to navigate and manage their varied emotions. Oftentimes, we hear and see younger students expressing what is referred to as basic emotions (angry, sad, happy) when explaining how they feel. Recently, the Explorer ARCH program aimed to broaden emotional management by incorporating concepts the staff learned about in a workshop on emotional self-awareness.

In February, The Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality led a workshop for all ARCH Site Coordinators that was focused on Emotion Centered Pathways. During this workshop, staff reviewed five main emotions: anger, fear, disgust, sadness, and enjoyment. They also discussed many other emotions which stem from those main five. Staff members learned how to use the LUVES model to provide emotional coaching. The ARCH staff will work to help students Label, Understand, Validate and better Express their emotions through the use of a color emotional wheel.

The staff simplified the color emotional wheel to fit their needs and renamed it the "Wheel of Emotion". The colors are used to encourage the scholars to better explain their feelings and enable staff to address the emotions of each child in a more precise way. The "Wheel of Emotion" will provide students a large visual that will assist them in using more descriptive words for their emotions.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING & POETRY

ARCH students at Glenwood took a deep dive into poetry last month. They learned about Langston Hughes and his unique style of blues poetry. Students were able to create their own poems afterwards. Some utilized the blues themes and discussed difficult topics in their poems. Some students chose happier and uplifting themes such as their love for their parents. The students then went on to illustrate pictures to go along with their poem themes. The poems gave students the outlet to express their creativity and their emotions through art while also building and increasing their writing skills. When students finished, they compiled their selections into a classroom book for all to enjoy their art.

Activities such as poetry writing give the students a vehicle to express their feelings. It stretches the students beyond their comfort zone and causes them to put words to their thoughts, feelings, and emotions. While writing, students shared thoughts about their work. Dulcemaria said, "I like writing poetry because it's fun and helps me to learn more words and sound out the letters". Tony said "writing poetry made me feel excited because I thought of my topic, and I thought it was cool. I wrote about life. I had two words that repeated four times and some rhyming words". Jislana said "It helped me get my feelings out". Other students had a hard time thinking of a topic. All students were challenged to go beyond their comfort zone and try a style of writing that requires focus and reflection.

ARCH is a place for students to participate in Academic enrichment, Recreation and the arts while learning about our Community and family services, and developing Healthy relationships. It is also a place for them to develop soft skills, emotional intelligence, and social emotional skills. When reflection is incorporated into lessons students form deeper connections to the lesson and develop a strong understanding of concepts. Connection also occurs through daily restorative circles and reflecting on each lesson and activity informally. Keeping all this in mind ARCH aims to cultivate emotionally mature and well-rounded students, one lesson at a time.



SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR SENIOR ATHLETES

The East Kentwood High School's Athletic Boosters are looking for applicants for this year's Peppino's Kentwood Athletic Booster Scholarships. \$1000 will be awarded to two EKHS men and two EKHS women. Criteria for the scholarship are: 1. Must be a graduating senior; 2. Must have a 1.5 GPA or higher; and 3. Must have EKHS athletic involvement as an athlete/manager/assistant manager. All applicants also must complete an [East Kentwood High School Boosters Scholarship application that is available online](#). The deadline to complete the applications is April 30, 2023.

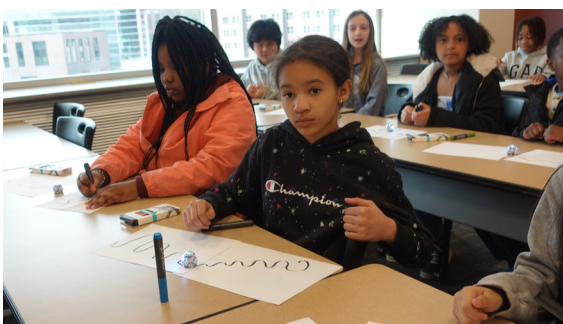
To have your application considered you must complete all parts of the application, including the short essay answering the prompt: "What life lesson(s) did you learn from EKHS athletics that you will use to be successful after graduation?" It is recommended that you complete the information and then copy and paste it into the application. Here are other items that will be asked in the application process: 1. Plans for post-secondary education or trade school (schools you have applied to); 2. Scholarships and grants you have already received (name of award as well as amount of award); 3. Athletic participation (grades, sports, level of sport); 4. Athletic awards (grade award is received as well as award name); 5. Volunteer or employment history (grade of school, type of work or volunteer experience); and 6. Concession participation (grade of school, where you volunteered, sport you volunteered for).

If you have any questions, please email KPSAthleticBoosters@gmail.com.



CROSSROADS RECEIVES ART IN EDUCATION GRANT!

On behalf of Crossroads Alternative High School, Kentwood Public Schools would like to thank the Michigan Arts and Culture Council (MACC) for the 2023 grant award in the Arts in Education Residency program. Crossroads received a grant of \$5000 from MACC, which will allow daytime learning in the visual and media arts for Crossroads students with the West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology (WMCAT).



KPS FIFTH GRADERS VISIT DAVENPORT UNIVERSITY

STEM learning is a big part of innovation taking place in Kentwood Public Schools. STEM is a focus on the fields of study of science, technology, engineering, and math. While we see STEM learning throughout the district in a variety of ways, a special effort is made in our district to promote STEM with fifth grade students throughout the year, to get these young learners interested in these fields as they prepare to leave elementary school and advance onto middle school.

In the fall, fifth grade students in KPS take part in STEM fairs held at elementary schools in the district. Valued community partners come to these fairs to engage our students in hands-on STEM learning. As a follow up to these events, during the second half of the school year, fifth grade students travel to Davenport University for more STEM learning fun. Davenport faculty lead students in STEM learning on these days and provide a tour of the university campus.

To learn more about the Davenport University visits, including the thoughts of students, [checkout this report from School News Network highlighting our Kentwood fifth grade students](#).



ENROLL NOW IN SPRING AND SUMMER PROGRAMS

LOTS OF GREAT PROGRAMS FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES!

- Art
- Basketball
- Biking
- Dance
- Soccer
- Martial Arts
- Cooking
- T-ball
- And More!



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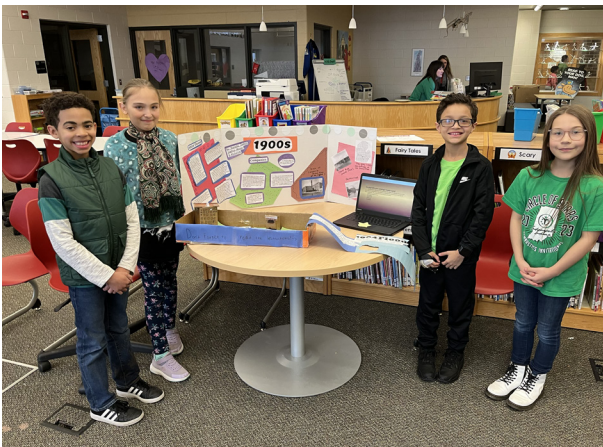


GRAND PROJECTS ON THE GRAND RIVER

Fourth graders in Mr. Schmidt and Mrs. Patrick's Discovery Elementary and Explorer Elementary classrooms have been diving into the Grand River, figuratively speaking. The fourth graders' exploration of our local waterway began with the district's newly adopted Multiple Literacies in Project-Based Learning science curriculum. Fourth grade's first unit, Dynamic Earth, focused on the phenomenon of changes in and around the Grand River. Students engaged in hands-on activities and experiments to learn about the causes and effects of erosion and deposition.

Mr. Schmidt and Mrs. Patrick's classes added to their learning by participating in a week-long experience called Immerse at the Grand Rapids Public Museum. The students investigated different museum exhibits, discovered ways that the people and industry in Grand Rapids have impacted the Grand River over time, and learned about proposed changes to the river and its surroundings.

As a culminating activity, both classrooms further researched the Grand River of the 1800s, 1900s, and today. Groups of students created exhibit-style presentations, inspired by the elements they viewed at the museum. Both buildings held Grand River Exhibit Showcases, sharing students' learning with peers, families, and Kentwood community members. While the future of the Grand River restoration plan is uncertain, this group of students will continue to feel a connection to the Grand River for years to come.



INNOVATIONS IN THE KITCHEN

When thinking of innovation in education, people most likely envision the classroom, and the work students are doing with teachers. Without a question, discovering and implementing new ideas to positively impact student learning is a major focus of Kentwood Public Schools. However, innovation is not confined to the classroom. Areas such as student nutrition are also places where innovation is thriving in Kentwood.

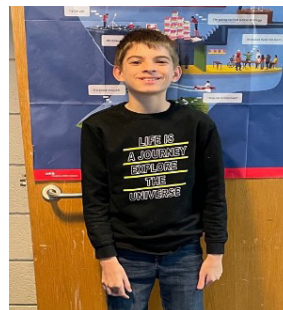
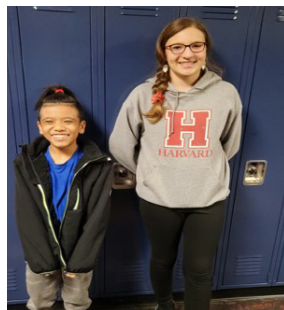
Thanks to the generous and continued support of the KPS community, approval of bond proposals has led to significant changes in facilities, particularly in kitchens and cafeterias across the district. According to Mo Shamali, Child Nutrition Director for Kentwood Public Schools, "KPS is transitioning from kitchens with residential equipment to commercial kitchens. These kitchens are more in line with restaurants and hotels."

Shamali says this innovation will allow schools in the district to focus on food production in their kitchens, providing for more variety in student lunches, more choices for students, and improving nutritional services. Plans are in the works to train the dedicated nutrition staff members of Kentwood Public Schools on how to best utilize the new, state-of-the-art equipment moving forward.

Kristen Lorenz, a registered dietitian now working with the KPS staff to collaborate and support the innovations taking place in nutrition services, is excited about what lies ahead for our students. "The KPS child nutrition staff is dedicated to learning more about this new equipment," Lorenz says, which will allow for more "scratch-based cooking." Lorenz adds, "We will then be able to develop menus that have more culturally diverse foods and more fresh foods, as well."

In short, the innovation will benefit students in many ways, as there is a strong link between nutrition and student learning and well-being.

[For more on child nutrition in Kentwood Public Schools, we invite you to watch this video put together by our friends and partners at AVES Films.](#)



KPS SPELLS SUCCESS

On February 28, ten Kentwood Public Schools' students participated in the regional round of the Scripps National Spelling Bee, located around the Grand Rapids area. These students finished as the top two spellers in their respective buildings. Congratulations to all of our KPS spellers!

- Aakash Rajkumar and Aleah Tepper- Discovery Elementary
- Akram Alshamali and Naseem Khan- Explorer Elementary
- Chase Shadowens and Sophia Le (not pictured)- Pinewood Middle
- Josiah Khenkhanthang and Mia Fisher- Crestwood Middle
- Kayley King and Medisa Kaltak- Valleywood Middle

REGISTRATION FOR THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

The window for online registration for the 2023 - 2024 school year is now open. All Kentwood Public Schools students, that includes returning students, new students, and school of choice students, who plan to attend a KPS school for the 2023 - 2024 school year in grades Young 5's and Kindergarten through 12th grade, must complete an online registration.

To register your child(ren) for next school year, please go to <https://www.kentwoodps.org/registration/olr/>. If you are a current family, you will login to your existing ParentVUE account to begin the registration process. New families will first create a ParentVUE account to start the registration process. Please follow the directions to complete each section and upload needed documents. Everyone who registers will need to show proof of residency.

The online registration window is open through May 12, 2023. If parents have any questions during this time, they should please contact their child's school where the office team will be able to answer questions and offer support.



STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

KPS values multilingualism! This semester, our talented multilingual 8th grade students had an opportunity to participate in the World Language Waiver testing. 155 future 9th graders earned 217 World Language credits! The World Language Waiver testing encompasses the assessment of reading and writing proficiency in native languages spoken by our diverse students. Students who take the exam may earn up to two high school World Language credits to fulfill the World Language requirements. This is the second year that Kentwood Public Schools has offered this opportunity to 8th grade students who are fluent in languages in addition to English. Congratulations to our students and Go Falcons!

EKHS ODYSSEY OF THE MIND PLACES FIRST IN STATE!

The East Kentwood Falcon Odyssey of the Mind team, a group that knows a good deal about innovation, has reason to celebrate. The team received 1st place in the State Finals held in March. The team will compete in the World Competition which will be held at Michigan State University in May.

Team members include Sophomores Brooklynn Bueche, Alexia Dault, Ko Montalvo, Avery Ringstrom, Abrielle Woodard and Freshman Julia Woodard. The team is coached by Kristina Ringstrom.

We are very proud of our State Champion Odyssey of the Mind team!! Go Falcons!



KENTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Calendar 2022-23

Aug 22 *First Day of School

- Sep 2 No School
- Sep 5 No School
- Sep 21 Half Day for ALL Students / PD for Staff
- Sept 28..... Middle School Conferences- Evening (Full Day for Students)
- Sept 29..... Middle School Conferences- Half Day for 6-8 Students
- Sept 30..... Half Day for 6th-8th Student & Staff
- Oct 12 & 13.... High School Evening Conferences (Full Day School)
- Oct 14 Half Day for 9th-12th Students & Staff
- Oct 26 Elementary Evening Conferences
- Oct 27..... Half Day K-5 Students / Evening Conferences
- Oct 28 Half Day K-5 Students & Staff
- Oct 31 Half Day for ALL Students / PD for Staff
- Nov 23 Half Day for ALL Students and Staff
- Nov 24 & 25 ... No School - Thanksgiving Break
- Dec 16 Half Day for ALL Students/KEA records day
- Dec 19 - 30 Winter Break
- Jan 2 Winter Break
- Jan 16 No School - MLK Day / PD for Staff
- Feb 14 Half Day for ALL Students / PD for Staff
- Feb 20 & 21 Mid-Winter Break
- Mar 1..... Middle & High School Evening Conferences / Full Day of School
- Mar 2 Middle & High School Evening Conferences / Half Day 6-8 Students ONLY / Full Day High School
- Mar 3 Half Day 6-12 Student & Staff
- Mar 27 Elementary Evening Conferences / Full Day
- Mar 28 Half Day K-5 Students
- Mar 29..... Half Day K-5 Students & Staff
- Mar 30..... Half Day for ALL Students and Staff
- Mar 31 - Apr 7. Spring Break
- May 26 Half Day for ALL Students / PD for Staff
- May 29 No School - Memorial Day
- Jun 2..... Last Day of School - Half Day for Students & Staff

School	Start	Dismissal	Half Day Dismissal
Elementary	9:00 AM	3:55 PM	11:55 AM
Middle	8:15 AM	3:04 PM	11:20 AM
Freshman Campus	7:30 AM	2:31 PM	10:53 AM
High School	7:30 AM	2:31 PM	10:53 AM
Crossroads	7:37 AM	2:29 PM	10:45 AM

AUGUST							JANUARY						
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SEPTEMBER							FEBRUARY						
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OCTOBER							MARCH						
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NOVEMBER							APRIL						
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DECEMBER							MAY/JUNE						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	28	29	30	31	1	2	3

No School For Students
 Half Day *check left column to see what schools have ½ days